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Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Friday, 14 September 1990, at 10.30 a.m.

President:

Mr. GARBA

(Nigeria)

- Policies of apartheid of the Government of South Africa [28]: (continued)
 - (a) Report of the Secretary-General
 - (b) Report of the Special Political Committee
- Programme of work

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The meeting was called to order at 10.55 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 28 (continued)

POLICIES OF APARTHEID OF THE GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH AFRICA:

- (a) REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/44/960 and Add.1-3)
- (b) REPORT OF THE SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE (A/44/709/Add.1)

Mr. SHAHEED (Syrian Arab Republic) (interpretation from Arabic): The General Assembly now resumes its consideration of the report of the Secretary-General on progress made in the implementation of the Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa. This meeting coincides with the unfolding events in South Africa, especially the present racist onslaught by the racist South African régime on the indigenous population and the resultant bloody havoc in that country. The aim of the régime is to escalate tensions into the sort of bloody strife that the country has experienced recently. This has been achieved through the machination of bloody clashes between sections of the indigenous population with a view to creating a situation of civil war and thus sidetracking the people from their just struggle against the invidious racist régime. That struggle has enjoyed the universal support voiced by the United Nations in its numerous resolutions which condemned apartheid and racism and upheld the right of the people of South Africa to dismantle the racist structure and to establish a united, democratic, non-racist State. The General Assembly has declared time and again that the South African policy of apartheid constitutes a gross violation of the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter. In an international convention and in several General Assembly resolutions apartheid has been condemned as a crime against humanity. It is clear that it is in the interest of the white racists in South Africa to perpetuate a situation which leads to more bloodshed among the indigenous population at a time when the latter, in their desire to create a new democratic society based on the principle of

(Mr. Shaheed, Syrian Arab Republic)

co-equality, have declared the suspension of armed struggle against the white racists. Regardless, the white racists hope to perpetuate the racist status quo which serves their interests. This they have done by igniting confrontations among the indigenous population as has been happening since 13 August. The result is a wave of violence which, so far, has claimed the lives of 731 blacks in addition to thousands of wounded and displaced persons and the burning and looting of hundreds of homes. All this adds up to a great deal of additional suffering to the long-suffering indigenous population whose economic and social conditions are abysmal. The latest statistics show that more than two thirds of them, that is, 28 million human beings, still live at the subsistence level and that thousands of their children die of malnutrition and various rampant diseases. Child mortality among the indigenous population has reached the rate of 125 per 1,000, compared to 15 per 1,000 among the white population. The same statistics show that unemployment has risen 35 per cent among the indigenous population, who are exploited as cheap labour by the white population.

The incitement to inter-black violence by the racist régime is made abundantly clear by the reluctance of the police to intervene. This has led Nelson Mandela to declare that, "the Government has either lost control over the police or the police are doing what the Government wants them to do".

The latest developments in the townships of South Africa and the massacres perpetrated by the racist régime such as that which has recently taken place in Sebokeng indicate that the viper may shed its skin, but its nature remains the same. All these happenings lay bare the real intentions of the racist régime, which will never shed its racist nature, happen what may. Because of this, the just struggle of the people of South Africa must go on and continue to enjoy the support of all freedom-loving peoples.

(Mr. Shaheed, Syrian Arab
Republic)

In this context, it is clear that the situation in South Africa has not moved yet in the direction envisaged by the people of South Africa and supported by the United Nations. The Secretary-General's report under consideration at present, as contained in document A/44/960, clearly states that:

"of the measures required by the Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa to create the necessary climate for free political activity, the measure relating to the lifting of the ban on political parties and movements has been implemented." (A/44/960, art. 12)

This is conclusive proof that the changes that are presumed to have taken place in southern Africa cannot be considered as constituting any fundamental irreversible change.

We fully share in the remarks of the Group of African States in document A/44/972 concerning the Secretary-General's report now under consideration. Those remarks are objective and realistic. They have helped Member States evaluate the Secretary-General's report since they have set the record straight. One of the facts rightfully brought out by those remarks is the fact that "the report does not seem to address the particularly important question of what needs to be done in order to ensure the régime's compliance with the Declaration". In addition, the report "totally ignores the roles of the liberation movements and the international community in bringing pressure to bear on the regime".

The remarks of the Group of African States also demonstrate that:

"the report would appear to place undue premium on views of the South African régime, to the detriment of the views of the liberation movements, which are invariably referred to as 'allegations', 'claims', or 'charges'". (para. 4.2 of the document)

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In addition, the remarks indicate that:

"the report is pointedly silent on the effects sanctions have had on the régime and that it denies the General Assembly a valuable opportunity to assess States members' compliance with the requirements of the Declaration, in particular the maintenance of sanctions against the régime." (paras. 4.3 and 4.6 of the document)

In this respect it is noteworthy to refer to the fact that the report of the Monitoring Group of the Ad Hoc Committee on Southern Africa of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) (A/44/963) clearly demonstrates that:

"There has not been any fundamental or irreversible change in South Africa. The so-called changes which have led some members of the international community to believe that pressures should be relaxed vis-à-vis the Apartheid régime fall far short of justifying that belief. Therefore, the recent sojourn of Mr. F. W. de Klerk and the attendant suggestions made to relax sanctions and other measures against the apartheid régime are tantamount to prematurely rewarding Mr. de Klerk and jeopardizing efforts to create the necessary climate for negotiations". (A/44/963, p. 29)

We support the Group of African States' conclusion that it will not be possible to create a favourable climate for negotiation unless the régime fully complies with the requirements of the Declaration. It is evident today that it will be impossible to achieve that goal other than by intensifying, and not easing, the international sanctions imposed against the racist régime, as sanctions continue to be the effective tool with which to dismantle racial discrimination so that the people of South Africa may fully accede to their legitimate rights. This was reaffirmed by the freedom fighter Nelson Mandela who said that:

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Republic)

"the sanctions that have been imposed should remain in place so long as the purpose for imposing them has not yet been realized." (A/44/960, p. 105)

We strongly condemn the policy of apartheid pursued by the racist South African régime as the most abominable form of racial discrimination. In addition, we condemn the destabilization policy in southern Africa pursued by the racist South African régime in order to protect its policy and safeguard its very existence. Moreover, we strongly appeal to the Secretary-General and the international community to intensify the efforts to complete the implementation of the General Assembly's Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa.

Syria, proceeding from its principled consistent policy against racial discrimination, which is the worst evil inflicted on mankind, wishes to reaffirm its unlimited support for any action or procedure that may lead to ridding the victims of racial discrimination from this bane. Because we believe in the unity of the Arab African struggle we reaffirm our full solidarity with the people of South Africa in its struggle against the apartheid régime.

As our brethren in South Africa suffer from racism, so, too, do our brethren in the Arab nation, in the occupied Arab territories, suffer from the practices of the racist Zionist régime in Palestine and other occupied Arab territories. In this respect, we wish to recall the courageous stance of Mandela in supporting the legitimate fight of the Palestinian people and denouncing the occupation by the racist régime in Tel Aviv of the occupied Arab territories which he voiced from this very rostrum at the United Nations and other forums.

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Republic)

Undoubtedly, the co-operation between the two racist régimes that enjoy the support of a super-Power because of the role they both play represents an obstacle to the common international endeavour to dismantle apartheid, and in addition encourages the apartheid régime in South Africa to persist in the policy of racial discrimination.

I wish to quote here from a statement of the Rapporteur of the Special Committee against Apartheid, Mr. Virendra Gupta, in his introduction to the latest report of the Special Committee on recent developments concerning relations between Israel and South Africa in which he said that:

"it is the view of the Special Committee that, despite the repeated statements by the Government of Israel that its relations with South Africa have been curtailed, collaboration continues unabated, particularly in the military field. Israel appears to have continued to supply military technology to South Africa, and from this point of view Israel's case is rather unique."

(A/44/PV.46, p. 23)

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FICHE

(Mr. Shaheed, Syrian Arab Republic)

It gives me great pleasure to extend my delegation's warmest gratitude to the Special Committee for its unrelenting efforts in the struggle against the most heinous crime against humanity. We wish at the same time to express our warmest affection and respect for the Chairman of the Committee, Ambassador Ibrahim Gambari as well the pleasure it gave us to work under his skilful guidance.

Participation in the efforts of the international community to liberate southern Africa from racial oppression and to establish a unified democratic, non-racial State in South Africa is a duty of mankind. We look forward to the achievement of that goal.

Ms. CHAN Heng Chee (Singapore): At the outset, I should like to say how pleased my delegation is to see you presiding over this resumed session of the General Assembly. This is especially so as both you and your country, Nigeria, have played a leading role in the efforts of the international community to eradicate the evil system of apartheid. My delegation would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his report on the implementation of the Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences.

In the nine months since the special session of the General Assembly adopted the Declaration, we have witnessed several new developments in South Africa. Mr. Nelson Mandela and several of his colleagues from the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC) have been released from their long incarceration. The banning order on the ANC, the Pan-Africanist Congress and the South African Communist Party as well as the restrictions on 33 other organizations have been lifted. Certain aspects of the emergency regulations have been repealed, restriction orders on individuals have been lifted, and the death penalty has been suspended pending adoption of the review procedure.

(Ms. Chan Heng Chee,
Singapore)

While these measures are encouraging, we have to ask ourselves the larger question whether South Africa is now firmly en route towards fundamental and irreversible change or whether the measures taken so far only constitute yet another tactic on the part of the Pretoria régime to yield on "petty" apartheid without dismantling "grand" apartheid. The litmus test would have been South Africa's compliance with the provisions of the Declaration on Apartheid, which sets out the international community's collective consensus on how the apartheid system could be dismantled through a negotiated solution. It is therefore important that we examine the developments of the last nine months carefully before accepting the changes in South Africa at face value.

Unfortunately, it is clear from the report of the Secretary-General and the report of the Monitoring Group of the Ad Hoc Committee on Southern Africa of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) that the South African Government has yet to implement all the measures required by the Declaration on Apartheid. The Secretary-General has observed in his report that of the measures required by the Declaration on Apartheid to create a climate for free political activity, only the measures relating to the lifting of the ban on political parties and movements have been implemented in full. Other measures have been implemented only in part. Even while Mr. Mandela and other ANC leaders have been freed, several more political prisoners continue to languish in the gaols of South Africa. Even while the banning order against the ANC and other organizations has been lifted, there exist a host of other restrictions and laws which limit the freedom of assembly of these organizations which prevent them from organizing freely. Even while executions have been suspended, political trials and imprisonment continue unabated under an abundance of repressive legislation and common law.

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Singapore)

Given this situation, it is understandable why Mr. Mandela stated the following when he addressed the Special Committee against Apartheid on 22 June.

"None of the principles laid down in the Declaration has been implemented to provide what the Declaration characterized as an internationally acceptable solution of the South African question. Similarly, the profound and irreversible changes which the Declaration visualized have not yet occurred."

(A/44/960, annex VI)

More recently, there has been a sharp deterioration of the situation in South Africa. Reports of continuing violence in the black townships, which has resulted in the deaths of large numbers of persons, are a cause for serious concern. My delegation supports the view expressed by the Special Committee against Apartheid on 29 August that the current violence in the townships is the direct consequence of apartheid policies, namely the homeland policy and the migrant labour system, which have increased tensions in black communities. The report of the Secretary-General also indicates that some of this violence could be related to activities by the police and security forces. There is some evidence that the police have not been impartial in the conduct of their duties. It is important that the South African Government adopt effective measures to end the violence and ensure the impartiality of the police in this situation. If such violence is allowed to continue unrestrained, the consequences could well set back the possibility of a negotiated end to apartheid.

It is also important to bear in mind that while the ANC and the South African Government have begun a dialogue, there is yet no clear evidence that the Pretoria régime is prepared to accept the right of all South Africans to participate in the government and administration of the country on the basis of universal suffrage, exercised through a one-man one-vote electoral system, under a common voters roll.

(Ms. Chan Heng Chee,
Singapore)

Instead, we have heard leaders of the South African Government preach "government by consensus" and insist on the need to preserve "group rights". That is nothing but a euphemism for race-based politics. Some of these rights concern the rejection of majority rule.

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Singapore)

The African National Congress of South Africa (ANC) has said that it will reject any constitutional proposal based on a group concept. We can understand why. It is another way of preserving apartheid. It is apartheid by another name.

In short, while my delegation recognizes and welcomes some of the bold measures taken thus far by the South African Government, we feel that essential changes have not yet occurred in South Africa to make the process of dismantling apartheid irreversible. The changes that President De Klerk has instituted thus far are basically a relaxation in the enforcement of certain security regulations and segregation laws. They have provided no movement on the issue now at the top of the agenda, that of political power. As Mr. Bruce Nelan, a senior writer at Time magazine, stated in a recent issue of Foreign Affairs:

"His" - that is, Mr. De Klerk's - "intention is three-fold: (a) to make a highly visible show of reform in order to impress the world; (b) to put the onus for a delay on the ANC; and (c) to draw 'moderate' black leaders and those he sees as the silent majority into negotiations on his terms.

"De Klerk hopes to avoid further sanctions if he can, but he will face them if they come rather than compromise on what he sees as nothing less than the survival of his Afrikaaner volk."

The conclusions from these observations are clear. Until and unless the South African Government has taken fundamental and irreversible steps to dismantle the apartheid system, the international community should uphold the sanctions against the Pretoria régime. It is a fact that international sanctions are instrumental in compelling the South African Government to unban various organizations and declare its willingness to enter into a dialogue with the representatives of the black majority. To remove international pressure at this time would amount to removing the vital leverages that could compel the South African Government to end apartheid.

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Singapore)

Singapore, together with the other Member States of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), is committed to the total eradication of apartheid. At their most recent annual meeting, in July, the ASEAN Foreign Ministers, while welcoming the release of Mr. Mandela and the unbanning of the anti-apartheid organizations, expressed the view that barriers to the total dismantling of apartheid remained in place. The ASEAN Foreign Ministers agreed that sanctions by the international community had been responsible for bringing the Pretoria régime to the negotiating table. In this regard, the ASEAN Foreign Ministers also agreed that sanctions must be maintained until the process of dismantling apartheid became irreversible.

In conclusion, my delegation would like to urge South Africa to implement unconditionally the preconditions set down in the Declaration on Apartheid in order to create the necessary climate for negotiations leading to the drawing up of a constitution for a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa.

Mr. OUDOVENKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) (interpretation from Russian): Sir, it gives me great satisfaction to welcome you once again to the lofty post of President of the General Assembly. The delegation of the Ukraine would like to wish you great success in your further activities.

Today it is exactly nine months since the day when the historic Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa was adopted within these walls. Thus it is natural for us to ask: is this period long enough to assess its implementation? In the Declaration adopted at its special session the General Assembly purposely set no deadline for the creation of the necessary conditions for negotiations or for the conduct of such negotiations between the Government of South Africa and the representatives of the majority population of South Africa, realizing the difficulties in store in solving one of the most

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chronic conflicts on the African continent. In our view, the recent past and current events in southern Africa make it possible to assess them appropriately, to determine the trends in the development of the current process and to note the constructive role of the Declaration adopted at the sixteenth special session of the General Assembly. Today we can with full responsibility note that the foundations have been laid for putting into practice all measures to create the necessary climate for negotiations. As is quite rightly stressed in the Secretary-General's report on the progress achieved in the implementation of the Declaration (A/44/960/Add.2), some of those measures have been implemented fully, and others partially.

The De Klerk Government has demonstrated a certain readiness for dialogue, lifted the ban on the activities of political parties and movements, released Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners and begun contacts with representative of the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC) aimed at inviting the Pan-African Congress to participate in the negotiations. However, the fundamental structure - and I would particularly like to stress this - of the policy and practice of apartheid has still not been dismantled. Discriminatory legislation still exists in the country and is one of the main obstacles to democratic changes in South Africa. In this connection I should like to call on the South African Government to implement all measures enshrined in the Declaration and to do so fully in order to create the appropriate atmosphere for constructive negotiations and for a practical solution of questions regarding the creation of a single democratic, non-racist State.

The recent past, including certain positive processes, has been clouded by outbreaks of violence, especially very recently, as has just been mentioned by the representative of Singapore, who spoke before me. Internal fighting in several

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townships in South Africa has taken the lives of hundreds of people, and hundreds have been injured and maimed. The De Klerk Government has tried to stand apart and dissociate itself from the disturbances; and when it has intervened, the actions of the police have frequently been particularly harsh.

It is evident that the outbreaks of violence and their consequences can create serious difficulties for the political process of settlement. We cannot but see that the roots of the present acts of violence continue to be nourished by the structures of apartheid that still exist, with their inimical and inhuman ideas on the separate development of races, accompanied by serious social inequities for the oppressed population of the country. The Ukraine shares the concern expressed in the report of the mission sent by the Secretary-General to South Africa that

"Apartheid laws, repressive regulations, and persistent violence, including that prevailing in Natal, continue adversely to affect domestic tranquillity as well as the sense of security and well-being of the people. So long as racial attitudes persist and apartheid structures at the local level remain, the process for change will encounter difficulties". (A/44/960, p. 57, para. 254)

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The report of the Secretary-General and the events occurring in South Africa show that the political process aimed at eliminating the system of apartheid is still in its preliminary stages. Much remains to be done, both by the interested parties and by the international community, in this area. It seems to us that the task of the international community, and above all of the United Nations and the General Assembly, is to promote by every possible means a speedy end to the era of apartheid, both through recommendations and through concerted actions. We are still convinced that sanctions are the most effective and the proven peaceful means of exerting pressure on the régime of apartheid to eliminate the system of racial oppression in southern Africa. We should note that the existing sanctions are not comprehensive, but from the point of view of the scope of their application and as regards the participants, they are sufficiently effective to force the apartheid régime to abandon its shameful practice of racial oppression. A mandatory embargo on arms supplies, a voluntary embargo on oil supplies and petroleum products, boycotts of cultural and sports links with Pretoria, together with the decisive importance of the resistance of the oppressed peoples of South Africa, have forced its régime to initiate the process of dismantling apartheid. At the same time, we are concerned at the fact that certain States are making attempts to weaken sanctions against Pretoria, adducing the unfounded arguments that, so they say, they are only making the ruling circles of South Africa more intractable and, in addition, are increasing the suffering of the indigenous population. We cannot agree with such arguments. On the contrary, and we are profoundly convinced of this, the lifting of sanctions or even their partial weakening at this stage threatens to slow down the move towards democratic changes in South Africa. We are also convinced that it is now that we need firmer implementation of those already agreed decisions and particularly of the aims set up by the Declaration adopted at

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the sixteenth special session of the General Assembly. It stresses the need, and I am quoting the Declaration:

"to ensure that the international community does not relax existing measures aimed at encouraging the South African régime to eradicate apartheid until there is clear evidence of profound and irreversible changes..." (resolution S-16/1, annex, para. 9 (d))

The position of the Ukraine on this question is contained in my Government's answer published in annex II to the report of the Secretary-General: I will not dwell on this further now.

In conclusion, I should like to draw one, perhaps the main, conclusion as far as our delegation is concerned. The Declaration adopted at the sixteenth special session of the General Assembly has become one of the most important instruments ever adopted by the United Nations on the problem of the elimination of apartheid. It is a programme document which serves as a clear guideline for agreed measures to be taken by the international community in implementing its goals. The enduring importance of this document is obvious both for the international community, and also for the struggling people of South Africa. The Declaration sets out the fundamental principles of a new constitutional order, of the necessary conditions and the guiding principles of negotiations, and has become the programme and stimulus for democratic changes in South Africa. The Ukraine is in favour of the strict implementation of all the provisions of the Declaration and of enhancing the role of the United Nations in the political settlement of the conflict in South Africa and considers it the task of the international community to do everything possible to promote the speedy elimination of apartheid through nation-wide dialogue in which all of the interested parties would participate.

(Mr. Oudovenko, Ukrainian SSR)

In conclusion, I should like to express the hope that the spirit of discussion reigning in this Hall and also realism as regards assessment of the events and prospects for their development in South Africa and the constructive approach of all delegations will enable the General Assembly today to adopt the relevant resolution on this agenda item by consensus.

Mr. ELIADES (Cyprus): Permit me, at the outset, to express our gratitude and deep appreciation to the Secretary-General of the United Nations for his report before us on the situation and developments in South Africa, covering the first six months of the current year. It provides a comprehensive and accurate picture, in a balanced manner, of the important political process currently taking place in South Africa, and that is no mean achievement in view of the complexity of the situation and the rapid movement of events, an achievement for which the praise of this Assembly is well deserved.

I wish also to commend the Secretary-General, on behalf of my delegation, for the statement he made the day before yesterday complementing his report and making certain important observations on subsequent events.

My Government fully shares and endorses his view that, although a process was under way towards the dismantling of apartheid through negotiations and through measures taken by South Africa, other essential measures, stipulated by the General Assembly in its Declaration last December, remained to be fulfilled in their entirety. These included the release of all political prisoners and detainees, the end of the state of emergency throughout the country, the repeal of all legislation designed to circumscribe political activity, the removal of troops from the townships and the cessation of all political trials and political executions.

Even though much remains to be done, we are greatly encouraged by the positive developments which have already taken place within South Africa during the current

(Mr. Eliades, Cyprus)

year, owing to the bold and decisive policy to which President De Klerk has committed his Government, paving the way for the dismantling of the apartheid system, as well as to the spirit of conciliation and magnanimity displayed by the Deputy President of the African National Congress of South Africa, Mr. Nelson Mandela, and the black leadership who, despite the bitter experience of injustice and oppression, have courageously pledged their commitment to a peaceful process for the eradication of all vestiges of the apartheid system and for the building, in its place, of a non-racial and democratic society.

Nevertheless, we cannot overlook the fact that a long and tortuous path lies ahead, littered with obstacles and unforeseen dangers at every turn. There is, from certain quarters, a menacing resistance to change which, coupled with the apartheid structures still entrenched by legislation, present difficulties and challenges which must be dealt with in a responsible and decisive manner.

The issue of violence in the townships of South Africa continues to be a source of great concern to all, and as each day brings new reports of deaths and destruction, we share an increasing sense of anguish. Notwithstanding the primary responsibility of the South African Government to maintain law and order, all parties concerned should contribute earnestly towards the speedy termination of the spiralling cycle of violence.

This task should be undertaken urgently and vigorously, because an atmosphere of peace and tranquillity is essential, among other important factors, for the creation of the appropriate climate for negotiations.

(Mr. Eliades, Cyprus)

On the positive side, we have noted with gratification that the early contacts of the South African Government with the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC) at their meeting at Pretoria on 6 August had a successful outcome, as reflected in their joint declaration. We are confident that the various agreements contained in that document will, through their implementation, enhance the prospects for substantive negotiations involving all parties concerned.

We also welcome with deep satisfaction the suspension of the armed struggle proclaimed by the ANC as an important step towards a negotiated peaceful settlement.

Finding ourselves at a critical threshold, more confidence-building measures are necessary to allow for unhindered progress that will eventually lead to a united, non-racial, democratic society in South Africa. The South African Government has undertaken certain commitments regarding the lifting of the state of emergency in Natal and to repeal further discriminatory legislation, but the bulk of the so-called pillars of apartheid are still impeding progress.

As the Secretary-General pointed out in his statement in the Assembly last Wednesday:

"The United Nations can claim with legitimate pride that the international consensus commanded by the Declaration on apartheid provided impetus to the process of change that has begun in South Africa. It is a consensus that has united the Assembly. It is a consensus that must be maintained. It is a consensus that must unite South Africa." (A/44/PV.97, p. 12)

Cyprus has always maintained a clear and determined stand against apartheid and on every appropriate occasion it has underlined its firm belief that apartheid, in all its forms and manifestations, should be completely and totally dismantled. In line with that principled stand Cyprus has adhered to the Programme of Action and will continue to do so as long as it is necessary.

Mr. MUSA (Malaysia): Mr. President, my delegation recalls vividly that under your able guidance and stewardship at the sixteenth special session of the Assembly last December we were able to take a historic step by adopting the United Nations Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa by consensus.

Permit me to take this opportunity to express my delegation's gratitude and appreciation to the Secretary-General for the efforts that he has undertaken, in particular the submission of his report (A/44/960) on the progress made in the implementation of that Declaration.

In order to review and evaluate the progress of the implementation of that Declaration we must look for evidence of profound and irreversible changes in South Africa that apartheid is being dismantled. We take note that there have been a number of positive measures undertaken by the South African régime to effect the process of change, and this has raised certain hopes and expectations. Unfortunately, the reality is that the pillars of apartheid still remain intact. The Group Areas Act, the Native Land Act, the Population Registration Act, the policy of bantustanization and the segregated education system all remain firmly in place. Those statutes provide the legal foundation for the system of apartheid against the majority population of South Africa.

The historic adoption by consensus of the United Nations Declaration on apartheid by the international community speaks for itself. The Declaration clearly manifests our abhorrence of the evil system that is perpetuated in South Africa. Apartheid is indeed a scourge and a crime against humanity that must be fought and eradicated in its entirety. For all those reasons the Declaration calls on the Pretoria régime to join in the noble effort of the entire international community to eliminate the apartheid system.

(Mr. Musa, Malaysia)

Many speakers before me have stated that the terms of the Declaration have not been met. My delegation could not agree more. The consensus Declaration dealt with the fundamental principles of a new constitutional order for South Africa, the creation of a climate for negotiations, guidelines for the process of negotiations and a Programme of Action in pursuance of the objectives of the Declaration. The Declaration has prescribed the measures that would contribute to the creation of the necessary climate in which free political discussions can take place. Unfortunately that climate and atmosphere of free political activity have yet to be created.

Malaysia fully subscribes to the view expressed earlier by other delegations that the changes are insufficient to have the necessary desired impact on the political, economic and social lives of the majority black population. Those changes do not address the question of the basic freedom the people of South Africa rightly and justly deserve as a basis for a durable solution to the problem. The unbanning of political organizations has not led to the full participation of the people in the political process of South Africa. While a few political prisoners have been released there are about 3,000 more still languishing under inhuman conditions in South African gaols. The Declaration clearly calls for the release of all political prisoners and detainees unconditionally and for the South African Government to refrain from imposing any restrictions on them. All this, together with the continuing intimidation and harassment by the police with regard to individual and group political activities, continues unabated, and it raises serious questions about the commitment of the régime in Pretoria to the creation of a climate conducive to negotiations.

My delegation views with serious concern the ongoing wave of violence in South Africa, particularly in the Province of Natal. We are saddened that the violence

(Mr. Musa, Malaysia)

has resulted in the loss of the lives of hundreds of people. The tragic incidents have occurred primarily because of the continued existence of the abhorrent apartheid policies, practices and structures. We see them as a perpetuation of the infamous strategy of "divide and rule" carried out by colonial régimes. We very much fear that this spate of violence will not only delay the peaceful process of change but could be used as a pretext by right-wing extremists and the régime in Pretoria itself to scuttle the process of change in South Africa. As it is, the Pretoria régime is dragging its feet in taking any measures to stop the flare-up of violence. We urge the Pretoria régime to take urgent action to put an end to the spate of violence.

(Mr. Musa, Malaysia)

We appeal to all parties concerned to contribute to the establishment of a climate free of violence and to work together to build a peaceful South Africa.

Nelson Mandela, Vice-President of the African National Congress, made clear to us in his address at the United Nations last June that nothing that had happened in South Africa called for a revision of the position that the United Nations had taken in its struggle against apartheid. He strongly urged that there should be no relaxation of existing measures, including sanctions. In this regard, my delegation wishes to reiterate the statement made by the Commonwealth Heads of Government at their summit meeting in Kuala Lumpur last October in which the Commonwealth leaders agreed that the only justification for sanctions against South Africa was the pressure they created for fundamental political change. The purpose of sanctions is not punitive but to abolish apartheid by bringing Pretoria to the negotiating table and keeping it there until that change is irreversibly secured. It is clear that the pressures being exerted by the international community have had a positive effect on Pretoria. Sanctions have hurt the Pretoria régime, and this is a major reason why the régime has been persuaded to institute the recent changes.

It is a matter of deep regret to us that certain countries chose to relax existing sanctions against South Africa to "reward" De Klerk for the few changes that he had effected in South Africa. My delegation believes that this "reward" is misplaced, as it should have been directed not to those who perpetrate the evil system of apartheid but to its victims who are dehumanized by it. We fully share the view stated by the Organization of African Unity Monitoring Group in its report that the relaxation of sanctions against the Pretoria régime is

"tantamount to prematurely rewarding Mr. De Klerk, and jeopardizing efforts to create the necessary climate for negotiations". (A/44/963, annex, para. 21.2.0)

(Mr. Musa, Malaysia)

Therefore we urge all Member States to remain faithful to the objectives of the United Nations Declaration to which we all are parties. Let us not destroy the unity and consensus that have been achieved and let us together maintain the existing sanctions until such time as there is clear evidence of profound and irreversible changes in South Africa. In this regard, the international community must take concerted and effective measures, including full observance of the mandatory arms embargo, to ensure a speedy end to apartheid.

It is clear to my delegation that the provisions of the United Nations Declaration on Apartheid must be fully and immediately implemented. We in Malaysia remain committed to doing everything possible and necessary to assist the people of South Africa in their legitimate struggle to eradicate apartheid. We call upon the Pretoria régime to respond fully to the peaceful gestures made by the African National Congress and implement fully the provisions of the United Nations Declaration.

We hold the régime in Pretoria responsible for creating a climate conducive to negotiations and for putting an end to the wave of violence going on in the country. My delegation shares Mr. Mandela's hope, expressed in his address at the United Nations last June: "The distance we still have to travel is not long". But we may have to face the reality that the journey is not likely to be smooth. We must continue to exert all our efforts to ensure that apartheid is eliminated once and for all. Malaysia and the other members of the international community eagerly await a united, non-racial and democratic South Africa in the not too distant future.

Mr. LEGWAILA (Botswana): Sir, I fully share the sentiments expressed by Mr. Chiepe, our Minister for External Affairs, last year on your assumption of the presidency of the General Assembly at the forty-fourth session. I wish to pay you a highly deserved tribute as you triumphantly approach your hard-earned retirement

(Mr. Legwaila, Botswana)

from that historic presidency. You have proved worthy of your mantle in many more ways than one. We continue to repose in your good self all the confidence and trust you so richly deserve.

We are confronted at this resumed session, as regards apartheid, with one simple question: how far has South Africa gone in the implementation of the sixteenth special session's historic Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa? Paragraph 10 of the Declaration requested the Secretary-General to prepare a report on the implementation of the Declaration by South Africa and submit it to the General Assembly by 1 July 1990. The Secretary-General has fulfilled the request, and we have before us a report as proof of that. The report is detailed, the product of a mission sent to South Africa by the Secretary-General in June.

The Secretary-General's report has a message for us all. Its paragraph 10 speaks of the "distinct possibilities for the dismantling of the apartheid system" (A/44/960, para. 10) that have been opened up by President De Klerk's "bold and courageous policy to which [he] has committed his Government". It goes on to state:

"Equally encouraging and statesmanlike" - and, I would add, daring - "has been the vision and forbearance displayed by the black leadership ... despite long years of injustice" (ibid.).

We agree with those sentiments. Both President De Klerk and the Deputy President of the African National Congress, Nelson Mandela, and the political institutions they lead have shown much courage and wisdom. South Africa, by any practical standard of measurement, has not been the same since 2 February, and particularly since 11 February, that memorable day when finally, after twenty-seven and a half years of wrongful imprisonment, Mr. Mandela regained his freedom. All these developments the Secretary-General's report celebrates quite appropriately.

(Mr. Legwaila, Botswana)

In another sense, however, South Africa remains the same. South Africa remains even more of a country at war with itself. Events on 2 February and 11 February may have opened up possibilities for the dismantling of apartheid, but peace in South Africa has remained a forlorn hope, as elusive as ever. The number of South Africans who have lost their lives either as a result of police brutality or as a consequence of factional strife and sheer thuggery - a thuggery that is neither political nor religious, but thuggery nevertheless - since the toll of 2 February has probably surpassed that of the 1976 Soweto uprising.

The brutality of the senseless mayhem is as unprecedented as it is mind-boggling. Even such public transport as trains have been turned into moving coffins. Dozens of innocent lives are being lost and wasted every day, even as we meet here to consider whether a climate conducive to the commencement of negotiations in South Africa has been created pursuant to the provisions of the Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa.

Why so much violence at a time in the history of South Africa that is supposed to be so pregnant with hope and promise? Why the seeming paralysis on the part of those who are responsible for the maintenance of law and order - the Government of South Africa? Far be it from me to suggest that the President of South Africa himself, who so bravely opened the floodgates of so much hope and promise, on 2 February 1990, could be associated in any way whatsoever with the depredations of those in his police force or outside it who seem bent on nullifying everything he has done so far in his quest for a new democratic dispensation for South Africa.

And yet, it would be utterly unrealistic of us to credit with unblemished good faith and a true sense of humanity a police force whose socio-political psychology, training and whole philosophy of life have been forged in the crucible of the apartheid culture. We have recently survived the terrible nightmare of dealing

(Mr. Legwaila, Botswana)

with a similar police force in Namibia, whose agenda during the implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978) clearly ran counter to the agendas of the United Nations Transition Assistance Group and the South African Government. No doubt, even today as I speak, some members of the police force in Namibia remain mired in their violent past.

We cannot, therefore, gainsay the very distinct possibility that we are witnessing in South Africa today an attempt by some members of the South African police force to perpetuate at all costs a Koevoet culture to prevent the birth of a new South Africa in which their warped philosophy of life would have no place.

There is also, I dare say, an equally distinct possibility that among the victims of apartheid there are those who for one reason or another, inexplicable to us, have allowed themselves to be used by the opponents of President De Klerk's and Mandela's initiative. They have allowed themselves to participate in a dance of death in which their own kind, their own brothers and sisters in the squalid single hostels of urban South Africa, are the principal victims.

All this bloody carnage is of course a boon to worshippers of the discredited past, the Afrikaans Resistance Movement and their kind. Instead of participating in the creation of conditions in which the precarious hope and promise of a new South Africa we hold so dear to our hearts could be nurtured in tranquility, the lunatic fringe in the white community and the black community is frantically stoking the fires of racial and tribal strife to justify its recidivism. There is within that lunatic fringe right now a gleeful wringing of hands in cynical gratification over the terrible violence that is threatening to make nonsense of whatever has been achieved thus far between President De Klerk and Mr. Mandela.

And yet, fortunately, there can be no going back. The Secretary-General's report shows what has been done in the implementation by South Africa of the Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa and

(Mr. Legwaila, Botswana)

what has yet to be done. That is important. It is clear to all that the welter of repressive legislation that forms the bedrock of apartheid is still in place, and there can be no atmosphere conducive to the commencement of negotiations so long as such legislation has not been removed from the statute books. I say this without prejudice to the assurance by President De Klerk that the said legislation - particularly the Group Areas Act, the Land Act, and several others - will be abolished in the next Parliament. That is an assurance, not a reality; it is a promise, and is not yet a fact. Until all that legislation has been abolished and all other conditions contained in the Declaration on Apartheid have been met, it would seem to us that any talk of whether or not the process in South Africa, whatever it is, has reached a point of irreversibility is patently misplaced. No profound change has occurred in South Africa to warrant a relaxation of the pressure that the international community has exerted on the South African régime over the years to force it to abandon apartheid.

Nevertheless, President De Klerk and the ANC have started the ball rolling. It may be rolling backwards and forwards, but they have started it rolling. We wish them well. There is no denying, as I said earlier, that in a very important sense South Africa has not been the same since 2 February. The Cape Town and Pretoria Minutes have shown that the promise of a new South Africa can, with careful nurturing, become a reality.

It has to be understood, however, that the talks about talks have thus far been a two-party affair. They have not reflected the intricate and volatile political pluralism of South Africa that must be fully accommodated in the negotiating process if the end result of such negotiation is to enjoy universal approbation. Mr. Mandela has rightly called for the formation of a broad front of the oppressed to face the Government at the conference table. The call should be responded to by all concerned without delay.

(Mr. Legwaila, Botswana)

I am not advocating cutting corners in so far as the implementation of the Declaration is concerned. I am not talking about negotiations at this stage because all that is going on in South Africa at this stage is talks about talks and because the implementation of the Declaration has not been completed. It would be unfortunate and tragic, to say the least, if the opportunities that have been opened up for a peaceful resolution of the South African problem were to be wasted.

(Mr. Legwaila, Botswana)

The Secretary-General's report speaks for itself. We hold Pretoria to its commitment to pave the way for peace in southern Africa. The Declaration on apartheid remains to be implemented in full. Significant steps, we concede, have been taken to implement it. The consensus, however, is that much, much more needs to be done to pave the way for the commencement of real negotiations for irreversible and profound change in South Africa.

Mr. INSANALLY (Guyana): The dramatic events in the Persian Gulf have overshadowed and perhaps obscured recent developments in South Africa. It is clear, none the less, that over the past months there have been notable changes in the political landscape of that country. Some of these have impacted on the prevailing system of apartheid, giving rise to the hope that its dismantlement is not far off. Other changes appear, however, to be for the worse and to jeopardize the process of negotiation necessary for the creation of a truly democratic South Africa based on equity and justice for all its people.

From all reports, the situation in that country, instead of getting better, is considerably worse than last year. There has been a recrudescence of violence to a point where, as the newspaper The Sowetan predicts, only chaos can result. Such an eventuality would be truly disastrous, endangering not only human life but also the future of negotiations between the Government and the African National Congress (ANC). The strains which currently exist between the Government and the anti-apartheid campaigners are evidently so severe that it seems to be futile at this stage to hold discussions. Negotiations cannot be effectively conducted in an atmosphere of tension between the parties. In the face of this disappointing setback, both sides have a clear obligation to reflect on the consequences of a breakdown in talks and to make a determined effort to settle their differences in the interest of peace and stability for South Africa.

(Mr. Insanally, Guyana)

And great differences there obviously are. The report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations as well as that of the Monitoring Group of the Ad Hoc Committee on South Africa of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) show that the South African Government's assessment of the progress made in the implementation of the Declaration on apartheid is not the same as that of the liberation movements and other protagonists in the struggle. Although varying in their perspectives, both documents conclude that while some progress may have been made at rapprochement, the division between the parties remains dangerously wide.

Some observers are prepared to acknowledge that since the beginning of this year there have been some positive developments within South Africa which have opened up "distinct possibilities for the dismantling of the apartheid system". Among those measures cited are the release of the country's most famous detainee, Nelson Mandela, and a number of other political prisoners; the suspension of the death penalty; the lifting of the ban and restrictions against hitherto proscribed political parties, the repeal of certain aspects of the emergency regulations; and certain budgetary and other initiatives aimed at improving the welfare of the black masses in South Africa. These measures have been highly vaunted by President De Klerk's Government as a manifestation of its commitment to change.

At the same time, it is obvious from the general reaction of the black majority that these changes, if not too late, are certainly considered too little. It is pointed out, for example, that while the state of emergency may have been lifted, the Public Safety Act, which enables the apartheid régime to impose the state of emergency, is still intact. Moreover, the repressive power of the Government remains entrenched in permanent legislation, such as the Internal Security Act.

(Mr. Insanally, Guyana)

Similarly, the main pillars of apartheid still stand, denying the credibility of change. Of the Group Areas Act one hears that it has to be "replaced in an orderly manner" and that until such time as effective and generally acceptable measures are substituted, the residential areas would be protected by that Act. Similar proscriptions govern the abolition of the Land Act. Regarding the Population Registration Act, which differentiates on the basis of population groups, it has been pointed out that it is "an inseparable part of the Constitution and the Electoral Act", and that, therefore, any amendment must be "in conjunction with the existing constitution", and so on.

Moreover, it has been established that even some of the more praiseworthy reforms are, at best, half-measures. The unbanning of political organizations has evidently not been taken far enough. For mere legislation without the necessary protection to function seems empty and insufficient. The release of political prisoners has been stymied by the debate over definition of terms. Further, the lifting of the state of emergency in areas other than Natal province has evoked unfavourable responses. Its later re-imposition in some sections of the Transvaal because of the much publicized black-on-black violence has been plausibly explained by the the authorities. However, the black majority and its leadership have found the explanations to be specious and designed primarily to satisfy international public opinion. Whatever we choose to believe, we cannot avoid coming to the conclusion reached by the Secretary-General in his report that, "so long as racial attitudes persist and apartheid structures at the local level remain, the process for change will encounter difficulties".

In light of this realization, the Government of Guyana believes that haste must be made to fulfil all the conditions prescribed by the United Nations and non-aligned countries in their declarations in order to create the appropriate climate for negotiation. Admittedly, such an objective is not easy to attain since

(Mr. Insanally, Guyana)

apartheid's partisans will certainly conspire to frustrate it. The Government of Pretoria may therefore find it more politic to proceed even more slowly at reform. However, as has been repeatedly stated in this forum, apartheid cannot be reformed; it must be eradicated. The Government has to realize that gentle thrusts will not kill the apartheid beast; it must be given a decisive death-blow. We therefore urge President De Klerk, who has been courageous enough to do battle, to rid South Africa of apartheid once and for all.

Like any wounded animal, apartheid is now at its most vicious and dangerous. One cannot say what it will do next in the interest of its self-preservation. The international community needs therefore to be extremely vigilant against complacency at this critical time. The United Nations must ensure that apartheid is given no quarter and that the full force of the measures aimed at its removal is felt. In this context, the pressure of sanctions, which has clearly done much to induce whatever change may have occurred in South Africa, must be maintained. This was the unanimous view of the Commonwealth Committee of Foreign Ministers on South Africa, of which Guyana is privileged to be a member, when it met last May in Abuja, Nigeria.

We would like to think, however, that good sense will prevail in the end and that the Government of South Africa will seriously negotiate a peaceful end to apartheid. The meetings held in Groote Schuur and Pretoria seem to confirm its bona fides.

On the other hand, in renouncing violence and displaying a willingness to compromise, the interlocutors of the ANC have made a statesmanlike and welcome response. This auspicious beginning leads us to the belief that all may not be lost and that, despite the current violence, the two sides will persist in their search for peace.

(Mr. Insanally, Guyana)

The Government of Guyana is therefore confident that it will not be long before we witness the demise of apartheid. As in Eastern Europe, the political floodgates have been opened and events will take their normal course. With the release of Nelson Mandela, the symbol of the anti-apartheid struggle, the process towards non-racial democracy in South Africa is inexorable and irreversible. No one who heard that great statesman speak on his visit to New York can ever doubt this.

(Mr. Insanally, Guyana)

In his address to the Assembly he asked us to keep faith, to keep up the pressure and to walk the "last mile" with the people of South Africa so that they may finally have, as he so poetically put it:

"a victory in hand, a dream fulfilled, the triumph of justice over a tyrannical past, the realization of the vision enshrined in the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights." (A/44/960, annex VI)

We must not disappoint him or the people of South Africa.

Mr. TADESSE (Ethiopia): Mr. President, you have guided the work of the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly so ably that it gives me great pleasure to see you presiding over these meetings with the same characteristic skill. Keenly aware of your eminent diplomatic qualities, I have no doubt that our deliberations will enjoy the success they deserve.

Since the adoption of the Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa by the General Assembly at its sixteenth special session last December, we have followed the developments in South Africa with a degree of anticipation and even guarded optimism.

None the less, as the Secretary-General's report on the developments in South Africa since the beginning of the year clearly indicates, there are as yet no fundamental changes which would encourage us to believe that substantial and irreversible progress has been made in that country. Indeed, if there is anything that the essence of the Secretary-General's report reveals, it is the fact that the Government in Pretoria has met only one of the five conditions set out in the Declaration pertaining to the creation of a climate conducive to the pursuit of genuine negotiations.

Although we are not oblivious to the impact that the unbanning of anti-apartheid organizations and the release of a limited number of political prisoners is likely to have on developments in South Africa, we continue to believe

(Mr. Tadesse, Ethiopia)

that the main pillars of apartheid remain intact. In fact, the very Draconian laws which served as the basis for the racial compartmentalization of South African society have yet to be nullified. The infamous Group Areas Act, as well as the Population Act, continue to serve as potent weapons for the marginalization of the black majority in South Africa.

In spite of our hope for the unconditional release of all political prisoners in South Africa, many remain confined to the dungeons of apartheid. Until such prisoners are released and conditions for the return of exiles are created, thousands of South Africans will remain deprived of their right to return safely to their homeland.

Perhaps the most distressing of the events taking place in South Africa is the persistent violence in the townships. This violence, often fanned by the right-wing elements of the white community in South Africa, together with members of the security forces, has not only resulted in unnecessary loss of life and property but also constitutes a stumbling-block to the pursuit of political dialogue. Given the gravity of the situation and its impact on developments in South Africa, it is imperative that this violence be brought to a speedy end. In this regard, the responsibility for maintaining law and order lies in the hands of the Government in Pretoria.

If the Pretoria régime has shown an inclination to resort to methods of dialogue with the victims of apartheid, it is primarily due to the universal sanctions imposed on it by the international community. These sanctions should remain in place until irreversible changes take place in South Africa and the pillars of apartheid are dismantled. While we salute all those States which remain faithful to their international obligations in the implementation of sanctions against South Africa, we cannot but express our dismay at the unilateral action taken by some to lift sanctions against that country. Such actions, erosive as

(Mr. Tadesse, Ethiopia)

they are, will not only undermine the efforts of the international community in its attempt to influence the course of events in South Africa, but will serve to send the wrong signal to those bent on limiting changes in that country to a level of cosmetic reforms. We therefore appeal to one and all to refrain from any action which may contribute to the relaxation of sanctions against South Africa until the international community so pronounces itself on this vital question.

In spite of the reluctance shown by the white community in South Africa to contribute to the formation of a united democratic and non-racial State, the chances for a peaceful solution to the South African question clearly exist. Any delay in the process of negotiation leading to a conscious effort aimed at the dismantling of apartheid will undoubtedly have ominous consequences for all sectors of South African society.

It is now up to those who are at the helm of power in Pretoria to act in favour of peace and democracy in South Africa or face the consequences of the violence, instability and uncertainty inherent in the very nature of apartheid. In their actions and deeds we hope that they will choose the former course of action.

Mr. MORTENSEN (Denmark): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the five Nordic countries, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and Denmark.

Nine months ago, at its sixteenth special session, the General Assembly adopted by consensus the Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa. The Declaration constitutes a strong and unanimous signal from the world community that the abhorrent system of apartheid must be abolished.

(Mr. Mortensen, Denmark)

The continued struggle against apartheid inside South Africa, and the unanimity demonstrated by the world community on that occasion played, in our view, a significant role in persuading the South African Government to embark upon a political process that holds the promise that profound political change in South Africa is finally within reach. It is therefore all the more important at our present session to preserve this consensus and aim at a constructive and balanced resolution in the spirit of the Declaration of last December.

We have before us the report of the Secretary-General on the Implementation of the Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa. The Nordic countries would like to take this opportunity to thank the Secretary-General for his very comendable work in giving a comprehensive, well-balanced and informative picture of developments and opinions in South Africa since the adoption of the Declaration. Although significant developments in South Africa have taken place since, the report will form a valuable basis for the General Assembly's deliberations on the question of apartheid at its forty-fifth session.

The Nordic countries have welcomed the reforms that have taken place in South Africa under President De Klerk, as well as the dialogue initiated between the South African Government and the ANC. The foresight and courage displayed by President De Klerk and Mr. Nelson Mandela in this process have been widely applauded. With the Pretoria Minute of 6 August a new milestone was reached, and the two parties have stated that the way is now open to proceed towards negotiations on a new constitution.

The Nordic countries have consistently held the view that profound and irreversible changes must be brought about through negotiations and without the use of violence. We welcome the important decision by the ANC to suspend all armed

(Mr. Mortensen, Denmark)

actions. All parties in South Africa should follow the example set by the ANC and the Government and commit themselves to finding peaceful solutions without resorting to violence.

Alongside the political process now under way, the South African Government should take urgent measures aimed at redressing the immense social and economic inequalities which exist in South Africa as a result of the apartheid regulations. As pointed out by the Secretary-General in his report, the widespread violence and the huge economic and social disparities could present difficulties for the political process if they are not recognized and addressed urgently and at the highest level.

The violence in South African society has increased tragically in recent weeks. All parties should do their utmost to break this tragic cycle of violence, stabilize the situation and solve their differences through dialogue. The South African Government has a special responsibility in bringing this situation to an end in an impartial manner.

It is evident that a momentous process has been set in motion in South Africa. However, a long and difficult road lies ahead. Important pillars of the apartheid system have yet to be removed.

It is against this background that the Nordic Foreign Ministers at their meeting in Norway on 11 and 12 September this year reaffirmed that their policy towards South Africa continues to be based on the central elements of the 1988 Nordic Programme of Action. The Nordic Governments will thus maintain the pressure on the South African Government, including economic sanctions, until there is clear evidence of profound and irreversible changes in South Africa.

The Nordic countries will continue to monitor closely the developments and the situation in South Africa. We will continue to exert our influence to promote

(Mr. Mortensen, Denmark)

dialogue and the process of democratization in South Africa. Our policies of restrictive measures will continue to be reviewed in the light of further developments in the situation in South Africa.

Mr. AKSIN (Turkey): At the outset, Sir, I should like to express our pleasure at seeing you, an eminent son of Africa, presiding over these very important meetings of the General Assembly.

Allow me also to pay a special tribute to the Secretary-General, Mr. Perez de Cuellar, and to the members of the United Nations team for having presented a comprehensive report on the progress made in the implementation of the General Assembly's Declaration on apartheid. That report gives a full and realistic picture of South Africa's political situation.

As the Secretary-General rightly states in his report, the situation in South Africa has begun to evolve in an encouraging direction since the beginning of this year. We hope this evolution continues and brings tangible improvements in the lives of the long-suffering people of the region.

Welcome as they may be, the changes that have occurred are still not sufficient to make the process of dismantling apartheid irreversible, and the measures required for the creation of a favourable climate for negotiation have not been implemented in full. Nevertheless, the steps taken by the South African Government, if sustained and completed by bold measures, might shorten the long and difficult road that lies ahead for the eradication through peaceful means of racial segregation and discrimination.

At this juncture I should like to refer to the release of some political prisoners including, especially, Mr. Mandela; to the lifting of the banning order

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on the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC), the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC) and other anti-apartheid organizations; and to the partial lifting of the state of emergency.

We believe also that the Groote Schuur Minute as well as the Agreement reached by the Government of South Africa and the ANC at the conclusion of their talks, if implemented on the basis of mutual trust and goodwill can, as stated in the Agreement "become a milestone on the road to the true peace and prosperity of the country".

Apartheid cannot be reformed; it has to be fully dismantled. To that end, it is essential to eliminate the main pillars of apartheid, such as the Population Registration Act, the Land Act, the Group Areas Act, as well as all the other laws and practices that underpin racial discrimination.

The elaboration of a new constitution, the holding of free and fair elections to a constituent assembly on a non-racial basis and, if necessary, the adoption of the principle of a national and not a minority referendum, will be the main elements that will test the determination and willingness of the De Klerk administration to dismantle this anachronistic system.

The wave of violence in Natal, which has recently spread to other parts of the country, constitutes a major source of concern for the future of the political climate necessary for negotiations. Aside from its devastating effects in a country historically divided along racial lines, the existence of violence can be used as a pretext to bring to an end the ongoing process which is already meeting with opposition in certain segments of the population.

At present, we are witnessing momentous changes in the world. Despite the recent crisis in the Gulf, there are promising prospects for the creation of a new

(Mr. Aksin, Turkey)

international order based on shared values, mutual confidence and international solidarity.

In the new era of rapidly changing world politics, the abhorrent system of apartheid struggles on for survival despite the universal condemnation of the international community. We are faced today with the historic responsibility of ridding the world of the scourge of racism which runs counter to the most fundamental values in which we all believe. We should take advantage of the consensus of the international community to maintain the momentum generated by our Declaration on apartheid, including the continuation of all existing pressures on South Africa until the present developments become irreversible. We cannot relax our efforts until apartheid has been totally eliminated.

Mr. ALARCON de QUESADA (Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): The need to implement the Declaration adopted by this Assembly by consensus is a solemn commitment assumed by all States Members of the Organization. This means that as soon as possible we must achieve the objective of a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa. To this end the profound and irreversible changes that the Declaration and its programme of action require must be strictly implemented by South Africa and all Member States must truly carry out the commitments undertaken through the adoption of that Declaration with its programme of action.

It has been pointed out that in recent days there have in fact been promising changes in South Africa, in particular the release of Comrade Nelson Mandela, the resumption of activities by the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC) and other peoples' organizations, and the beginning of a dialogue between the ANC and the Pretoria authorities. But as regards with these changes it must also be said that they are insufficient, that they do not correspond to what was stipulated in this Assembly's Declaration and, furthermore, while some changes have occurred and while we do see the possibility of hope for a peaceful solution to this too long conflict, it has been due to two fundamental reasons: first of all, the struggle of the African people of South Africa itself, its long, heroic, self-sacrificing struggle, and the support of the international community for the South African national liberation movement and its demand for the dismantling of apartheid.

Any attempt to introduce the idea that solidarity with the liberation movement should be reduced or international pressure against apartheid lessened could hamper the peaceful settlement of this problem and produce the opposite result. It is for this reason that my delegation wishes to express its agreement with the comments contained in document A/44/972 submitted by the Group of African States

(Mr. Alarcon de Quesada, Cuba)

responding to the report submitted by the Secretary-General. We must say quite frankly that we share the African concern about certain wordings contained in the Secretary-General's report and about the fact that certain points are omitted in it. We believe that we must reject any attempt to reach an accommodation with apartheid. Apartheid is not negotiable; it must be eliminated and we are all in duty bound to do what we have pledged to do towards bringing about an end to that régime.

The Secretary-General's document indicates how the attitude of certain Members of the Organization really does not correspond to the commitments undertaken. It suffices to see the comments contained in paragraph 6.1 of the African paper in connection with their profound concern at the fact that a member of this Assembly has lifted sanctions in flagrant violation of the letter and spirit of the Declaration adopted by consensus.

Other responses contained in the Secretary-General's report also indicate that not everyone is equally committed to the Declaration we adopted here. I would also like to point out that as this Assembly is gathered here to discuss this question we are also seeing a peculiar situation of grave danger for mankind, one that poses a great challenge to our Organization, namely, the deplorable conflict in the Persian Gulf which has obliged our Organization, through its Security Council, to take drastic measures whose imperative implementation has been urged by the Security Council.

We believe that it is correct for the Security Council to attempt to assume its responsibilities wherever international peace and security are threatened or breached. But we cannot accept a selective approach to the implementation of the principles of the Charter. I must draw this Assembly's attention to the fact that while, on the one hand, we are demonstrating that effectiveness in applying sanctions and seeing to their implementation, on the other hand we must note that

(Mr. Alarcon de Quesada, Cuba)

unfortunately the embargo on arms to South Africa established in Security Council resolution 421 (1977) has not drawn the same interest and attention in our Organization. The Committee that was established by the Council to monitor the implementation of those sanctions is at the present time at a critical stage, finding itself almost unable to act; not everyone has shown a genuine interest in seeing to it that those sanctions and other measures which the Assembly pledged to implement become reality.

Lastly, we should like to point out that there are some specific aspects of the Declaration and the programme of action adopted by this Assembly by consensus that clearly are violated on a daily basis. I read one of the commitments required here from the document before us for our consideration. It reads as follows:

"To extend such assistance to the Governments of Angola and Mozambique as they may request in order to secure peace for their peoples, and to encourage and support peace initiatives undertaken by the Governments of Angola and Mozambique aimed at bringing about peace and normalization of life in their countries". (A/44/960, p. 113)

This paragraph, if we understand it correctly, is also binding on the Government of the United States of America, but it is clear that that Government has not been supporting the peace initiatives of Angola and Mozambique nor has it ceased its attempts to promote instability in Angola.

(Mr. Alarcon de Quesada, Cuba)

In conclusion, Mr. President, we would like to state that our Assembly should reaffirm everything contained in the Declaration and its programme of action and that it should reaffirm the need to implement it fully and immediately. We must firmly establish that the steps that must be taken by South Africa to implement this Declaration must be final and irreversible, as established in the Declaration that has been adopted. We must urge all Governments and all intergovernmental organizations strictly to respect the programme of action and the Declaration. We must clearly stipulate that the South African régime must, without delay, establish conditions conducive to negotiations by taking all the steps set forth in our Declaration and, in particular, by carrying out its commitment to repudiate any repressive legislation that may still restrict the possibility for political action on the part of African organizations.

We hope that this session of the General Assembly will contribute to demonstrating the real commitment of the international community to see to it that this Declaration and its programme of action are respected and strictly carried out by all members.

Mr. PHOOFOLO (Lesotho): Mr. President, the Kingdom of Lesotho is always happy to see you continuously championing the cause of freedom and justice. You continue to be a source of great inspiration to us. You are indeed our pride.

As we focus on the report of the Secretary-General as mandated by the consensus Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa adopted in December 1989, it becomes essential and imperative to delve slightly into the historical evolution of apartheid and, consequently, the entire paraphernalia that goes with it.

When the South Africa Act of 1909 gave birth to the Union of South Africa in 1910 that ushered in a tragic era which has led to the present status of affairs in South Africa. A black man and all other people of colour, everyone save the people

(Mr. Phoofolo, Lesotho)

of European origin, were definitively and deliberately made to face perpetual suffering in their land of birth. The Africans were intentionally and consciously turned into foreigners in their God-given land. No Africans ever came from Europe as missionaries, traders, explorers or colonialists in search of material wealth and domination of other people.

The perpetual suffering of a black man in South Africa has essentially been a struggle for a birthright. An African has continued to suffer humiliation and all sorts of deprivation because of the colour of his skin. An African was deprived of his right to determine freely the affairs of his life in his own country, subjected to a barrage of repressive laws that were codified as apartheid policies. These are the policies that aimed at the destruction of a black man, not only in South Africa, but also in all that is part and parcel of southern Africa.

When the "civilized world" was still insensitive to the perpetual suffering of the black man in South Africa, it was the great people of India who brought to the attention of this global coalition the evils of apartheid which have been destructive in the region. The magnitude of the destructiveness of apartheid policies on political, economic and social sectors in the region is a matter of common international knowledge.

Apartheid has not only been merciless towards black people, but it has also been ruthless across the age groups, gender and social standing of individuals as long as the skin's pigmentation was not perceived as white. Precious life has been lost, property destroyed and untold human suffering experienced by all those who had been turned into strangers in their land of birth as well as by those who are neighbours. In the wake of peaceful demonstrations against apartheid, as the defiance campaigns of the 1950s and the like took place, ruthless suppression became the norm. A black man has since been in pain physically and mentally.

(Mr. Phoofole, Lesotho)

The world continued not to accept that apartheid was on the rampage until the trigger-happy police of South Africa massacred scores of black South Africans in Sharpeville at yet another peaceful demonstration against apartheid pass laws that had made a black man a complete alien in his country. The Sharpeville massacre of innocent men, women and children of colour set in full motion the spiral of apartheid violence and its concomitant destructive consequences in southern Africa. Bannings, detentions without trial, deaths in prisons, deportations, political executions and flight for personal safety became the order of the day as far as the oppressed were concerned, and so were cross-border raids that inflicted extensive damage on all the countries in southern Africa.

As southern Africa was in flames, this global partnership had not ceased debating and passing endless resolutions condemning and denouncing apartheid's policies and its destructive consequences in southern Africa. The fact of the matter is that the international outcry against apartheid and its destructive consequences in southern Africa was decisively placed on a positive road by the battle of Cuito Cuanavale in Angola. The rippling political effects of that historic encounter with the forces of apartheid are well known - Namibia is amongst us as a free country still battling to put its house in order economically and socially.

Mr. President, it is a well-known fact that school children were forced to flee their beloved country in 1976, and they remain scattered the world over to this day because of the continuation of apartheid policies. Some died, some were maimed and others permanently disabled in the perpetual suffering inflicted on the black people of South Africa as a result of the existence of the Population Registration Act, the Group Areas Act and the Land Acts, which are still alive and very well in the South African statute books.

(Mr. Phoofolo, Lesotho)

As a logical, but regrettable consequence of apartheid, the political and economic climate in South Africa has always been characterized by violence. Hence, the state of emergency and the plethora of the legislation designed and calculated to circumscribe political activity in the country.

(Mr. Phoofolo, Lesotho)

The Declaration that led to the report before us is very clear in its message and direction. We take note with a sense of appreciation of the fact that the Secretary-General has discharged his mandate under the Declaration. We equally take note of the political events that have occurred in South Africa since the adoption of the consensus Declaration by the Assembly.

Inasmuch as the United Nations Secretariat mission concluded that "South Africa has reached the threshold of a new era", it has nevertheless to be observed that violence as a consequence of apartheid has perpetually and consistently remained in place in South Africa. The shameful fratricidal killings in Natal have continued unabated, and now the genocide has spread into Transvaal Province and into the Soweto area in particular. The international community cannot agree that the killings of peaceful protesters in Sebokeng in March and July of this year have been encouraging prospects for the dismantling of apartheid.

The perpetually suffering people of colour, as defined by apartheid, continue to bleed profusely in Soweto, Kagiso, Vosloorus, Welkom and other parts of South Africa as the three fundamental pillars of apartheid remain in place. Dust has not settled on the roads leading to the black graveyards because of the continuation of past, recent and present enforcement of apartheid legal instruments.

It is not debatable. It is a fact undisputed by all reasonable people that constitutional development in South Africa must primarily be a sovereign and legitimate right of its citizens. It is equally a fact that the perpetually bleeding masses of South Africa are fully conscious that their liberation is essentially in their own hands. But the ongoing carnage that is taking place under sophisticated and efficient law-enforcement machinery cannot be tolerated by people of conscience. It would be immoral to do so. The existing police and military infrastructure in South Africa cannot fail to put an end to the ongoing spiral of

(Mr. Phoofofo, Lesotho)

apartheid violence, should there be a genuine desire on the part of those currently in control of the State apparatus to do so.

We call upon the Assembly not to falter in its noble cause of seeing to the profound and irreversible elimination of apartheid and its destructive consequences. The economic endowments of the region should not be the preoccupation of any country until positive attitudes are displayed across the entire political spectrum of South Africa. President De Klerk, now that he has commendably and publicly joined the struggle to eliminate apartheid, must be encouraged to deal resolutely with the arch-conservatives to forgo the apartheid mentality, and the police should rise to the occasion by saving precious lives and protecting the property of the black people in South Africa. Only a peaceful atmosphere can lead to a political climate conducive to facilitating the accomplishment of the preconditions of the United Nations consensus on apartheid and its destructive consequences.

The concept of tribalism has no place in South Africa. People have long outgrown such divisive tendencies and tactics. The architects and instigators of tribal differences will not succeed. They are doomed to failure. The New York Times of 13 September 1990 confirmed on page 4 that residents had denied that the war was tribal, and quoted a woman who said that

"her neighbourhood included Xhosas, Sothos and even Zulus who had lived together amicably".

Not only is it deceptive to refer to tribalism in current pogroms, it also abets the delusive attempts being made by the apostles of apartheid violence.

The South African problem is a common struggle for a birthright. It is a struggle for freedom and justice, a struggle for a united, non-racial and democratic South Africa. It is a struggle for mutual respect and for mutual

(Mr. Phoofole, Lesotho)

tolerance and accommodation. It is a struggle against poverty in the midst of plenty and affluence. It is a struggle for equity and social justice, for redressing the allocation and distribution of natural resources. It is a struggle for the very survival of the oppressed majority. It is basically a struggle for human rights.

Above all, it is a total and final onslaught directed at the eradication and elimination of apartheid, one to which the international community is committed.

Let us not forget the invitation extended to us by the Deputy President of the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC), Mr. Nelson Mandela, when he addressed the Organization last June. He concluded his statement by saying:

"The distance we still have to travel is not long. Let us travel it together." (A/44/960, annex VI, p. 107)

So let us continue on the freedom march. Victory is in sight.

Mr. HATANO (Japan): I am honoured to speak on behalf of the Government of Japan at this resumed session of the General Assembly on apartheid.

At the outset I should like to pay a tribute to the United Nations for the role it has been playing for the elimination of racial discrimination and for the advancement of human rights and fundamental freedoms. We appreciate in particular the steadfast efforts the Organization has continued to make for the abolition of apartheid since December of last year, when its Member States adopted by consensus the General Assembly Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa.

On this occasion I wish to reiterate Japan's firm and steadfast opposition to all forms of racial discrimination, and particularly to discrimination in its most hideous form, apartheid. No enlightened society can tolerate racial discrimination. The system of apartheid, which is nothing other than

(Mr. Hatano, Japan)

institutionalized racism, disregards universal human values and blatantly violates the spirit of the United Nations Charter. It is thus incumbent upon the international community to co-operate for its total eradication as soon as possible.

Since February of this year the Government of South Africa has taken a series of noteworthy initiatives, including the release of Mr. Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners, the unbanning of anti-apartheid organizations such as the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC) and - with the exception of some parts of the country - the lifting of the state of emergency. Those measures constitute genuine progress towards the abolition of apartheid.

(Mr. Hatano, Japan)

Another major step towards the peaceful resolution of the problem was the agreement by the ANC, reached through dialogue with the South African Government, to suspend its armed struggle. In so doing, the ANC has helped pave the way for the commencement of serious negotiations for the drafting of a new constitution. The roles played by President de Klerk and the Deputy President of the ANC, Nelson Mandela, have been crucial to these efforts.

It is my honour and privilege to announce here that Mr. Mandela will visit Japan late in October, at the invitation of my Government. I wish to emphasize that Japan has extended the invitation as part of its effort to expand dialogue with both the Government and black leaders of South Africa. The Government of Japan thus welcomes the visit of Mr. Mandela, who, since his release from prison last February, has consistently sought the abolition of apartheid through a process of negotiation.

In the light of the progress that has been made in the past year, it is particularly regrettable that violence is now escalating in some parts of the country. We cannot but be concerned that the recent outbreak of violence may have grave implications for the future of South Africa even after apartheid is abolished.

The reform efforts of the South African Government have given us reason to be optimistic regarding the commencement of substantive negotiations in the future. Nevertheless, additional measures must be taken to remove the discriminatory laws and repressive regulations for the preservation of the peace that remain in force. The Government of Japan will continue to work to convince the Government of South Africa to rescind these laws and indeed abolish once and for all its policy of apartheid.

(Mr. Hatano, Japan)

I wish to conclude my remarks today with an expression of the hope that substantive negotiations will be convened with the participation of all parties concerned, so that a truly democratic régime, under which all the people are guaranteed equal rights and fundamental freedoms, can be established in South Africa in the very near future.

PROGRAMME OF WORK

The PRESIDENT: With regard to agenda item 28, a draft resolution will be issued this afternoon as document A/44/L.68 and will be available at the document distribution counters after 4 p.m. Action on this draft resolution will be taken on Monday morning, 17 September.

With regard to agenda item 114, "Enhancing the effectiveness of the principle of periodic and genuine elections", I should like to inform members that, in order to allow the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and the Fifth Committee to consider the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/44/L.67, the Assembly will also take action on this draft resolution on Monday morning, immediately after consideration of agenda item 28.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.



General Assembly

PROVISIONAL

A/44/PV.100
25 September 1990

ENGLISH

Forty-fourth session

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE ONE HUNDREDTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Monday, 17 September 1990, at 4 p.m.

President: Mr. GARBA (Nigeria)

- Policies of apartheid of the Government of South Africa [28] (continued)
 - (a) Report of the Secretary-General
 - (b) Report of the Special Political Committee
 - (c) Draft resolution
- The situation in Central America: Threats to international peace and security and peace initiatives [34] (continued)
- Question of Palestine [39] (continued)
- Armed Israeli aggression against the Iraqi nuclear installations and its grave consequences for the established international system concerning the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and international peace and security [46]

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This record contains the original text of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the Official Records of the General Assembly.

Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, within one week, to the Chief, Official Records Editing Section, Department of Conference Services, room DC2-750, 2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

- Question of Cyprus [47]
Consequences of the prolongation of the armed conflict between Iran and Iraq [48]
- Enhancing the effectiveness of the principle of periodic and genuine elections: draft resolution [114] (continued)
- Closing address by the President
- Closure of the forty-fourth session

The meeting was called to order at 4.30 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 28 (continued)

POLICIES OF APARTHEID OF THE GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH AFRICA

- (a) REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/44/960 and Add.1-3)
- (b) REPORT OF THE SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE (A/44/709/Add.1)
- (c) DRAFT RESOLUTION A/44/L.68

The PRESIDENT: In connection with this item, the General Assembly has before it the report of the Special Political Committee, issued as document A/44/709/Add.1.

May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of the report?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: I should like to remind members that the debate on this item was closed on Friday, 14 September, and that a draft resolution, contained in document A/44/L.68, became available on that day.

I now call on the representative of Nigeria to introduce draft resolution A/44/L.68.

Mr. GAMBARI (Nigeria), Chairman of the Special Committee Against Apartheid: I have the honour to introduce draft resolution A/44/L.68, on progress made in the implementation of the Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa.

At the outset, I wish to report to the General Assembly that the draft resolution before it, which we hope will obtain the support of all Member States, has been the successful result of intensive consultations with various delegations during the last five days.

(Mr. Gambari, Chairman, Special
Committee against Apartheid)

On behalf of the Bureau of the Special Committee against Apartheid, I take this opportunity to express our sincere appreciation for the support and co-operation displayed by all delegations in this effort. A great number of representatives, from all regional groups, assisted the Bureau and me diligently, imaginatively and constructively in fine tuning the draft text. It was very encouraging to see that the experience and spirit that brought about the consensus on the Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa was maintained and that it led to the text of the draft resolution now before the Assembly.

I should like to take this opportunity to thank all representatives who were instrumental and helpful in the lengthy and detailed drafting process. Their patience and perseverance made the successful completion of the draft text possible. I wish also to thank the Centre against Apartheid for its hospitality and for its role in facilitating our work.

To reach a consensus text always requires compromise and flexibility, and at the same time an avoidance of the sacrifice of principles or the burying of facts. Above all, the text should be relevant to and supportive of the process that is unfolding inside South Africa. I am proud to say that the text before the Assembly has achieved those objectives. I very much hope, therefore, that the spirit of co-operation experienced over the past few days will allow the adoption of the draft resolution before us by consensus.

The draft resolution takes as a framework and a starting-point the historic consensus Declaration adopted last December and even uses identical language to the extent possible. The first preambular paragraphs recall the Declaration and the request contained in it to the South African régime to take a number of steps to create a climate suitable for negotiations and the call on the international

(Mr. Gambari, Chairman, Special
Committee against Apartheid)

community not to relax existing measures until there is clear evidence of profound and irreversible changes in South Africa.

The fourth preambular paragraph notes that Members of the United Nations and the international community have generally adhered to the programme of action contained in the Declaration; at the same time it expresses concern at departures that have occurred from the international consensus reflected in the Declaration.

As members will recall, paragraph 10 of the Declaration requests the Secretary-General to submit to the Assembly a report on the progress made in the implementation of the Declaration. That report, which formed the basis of our discussions over the past three days, contains the observations of the Secretary-General and the detailed findings of the mission he dispatched last June to South Africa, as well as replies of Member States, of which the Assembly has taken careful note. The fifth preambular paragraph mentions this, and welcomes the contribution the Secretary-General has made on the subject. The draft resolution also takes note of the report (A/44/963) of the Monitoring Group of the Ad Hoc Committee on Southern Africa of the Organization of African Unity, as well as of other statements and reports from Member States and regional groups on the issue.

The eighth preambular paragraph takes note of the declared commitment of the Government of Mr. De Klerk to abolish apartheid and of the number of significant measures in the right direction that have been taken by the régime; it suggests that continued efforts are needed to establish a climate fully conducive to negotiations and free political activity. The ongoing talks between the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC) and the South African régime aimed at eliminating obstacles to the beginning of substantive negotiations, and the results achieved so far in the meetings in Cape Town and Pretoria, are welcomed in the ninth preambular paragraph.

(Mr. Gambari, Chairman, Special
Committee against Apartheid)

Finally, the tenth preambular paragraph expresses the Assembly's grave concern at the escalating violence resulting largely from the continued existence of the apartheid policies, practices and structures and from the actions of those opposed to the democratic transformation of South Africa. Indeed, the wave of violence that has in recent times become almost a daily occurrence in South Africa was a subject raised by all the speakers in this debate and about which the Secretary-General himself has expressed his deep anguish and deep concern.

The operative paragraphs reaffirm the need for the full and immediate implementation of the Declaration and declare that further steps need to be undertaken by the South African régime in order to implement the profound and irreversible changes called for in the Declaration.

Paragraph 3 calls upon all Governments and intergovernmental organizations to adhere strictly to the programme of action and to maintain existing measures aimed at encouraging the régime to eradicate apartheid.

In paragraph 4 Pretoria is called upon to proceed without delay to establish a climate fully conducive to negotiations by taking all the steps mentioned in the Declaration and in the light of its commitment to repeal all legislation designed to circumscribe political activity.

In paragraph 5 the draft resolution calls for an immediate end to violence and urges the South African authorities to take urgent action to end it. Concern over activities of elements of the security forces regarding the instigation and treatment of violence is reflected in that paragraph in its call upon South Africa to ensure effective and impartial action by the security forces. Furthermore, there is a call on all parties concerned to contribute to the establishment of a climate free of violence, as required in the Declaration.

(Mr. Gambari, Chairman, Special
Committee against Apartheid)

Paragraph 6 welcomes the talks between the ANC and the South African authorities and the results achieved at their meetings, which aim at facilitating the beginning of substantive negotiations. Recognizing the initiative taken by the ANC in calling for talks, paragraph 7 commends the ANC for that initiative and for its extremely important decision to suspend the armed struggle.

Paragraphs 8 and 9 introduce a new element which has emerged since the adoption of the Declaration, namely the need to assist the re-establishment of previously banned political organizations and the integration of political prisoners who have been released or are expected to be released in future months. The international community and the Secretary-General are asked to provide all possible assistance for that purpose. Further, the Secretary-General is requested to provide assistance, through the relevant United Nations agencies, for instance the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), for the repatriation of South African refugees and political exiles. The South African authorities, the liberation movements and other organizations in South Africa and the international community are requested to support this endeavour.

In its final paragraph, the draft resolution recognizes the importance of the contribution the Secretary-General can make, requesting him to remain actively seized of developments in South Africa and to submit by 30 June 1991 a report on the further implementation of the Declaration.

I believe the draft resolution is a clear message to the South African authorities that, while the General Assembly has taken full note of all the positive steps they have taken in the past few months, much more needs to be done. It acknowledges the importance of the contacts between the Government and the ANC in assisting this process and at the same time considers that the current violence in South Africa needs urgently to be curbed. That is the primarily responsibility

(Mr. Gambari, Chairman, Special
Committee against Apartheid)

of the South African régime, which must be made to ensure that its security forces act with effectiveness and impartiality. It is also an endeavour in which all South Africans should take part with determination. Finally, the draft resolution is a new pledge by the international community to adhere strictly to the programme of action and to maintain the pressure which at this stage is considered necessary to assist the encouraging process that has just started in South Africa.

On behalf of all the delegations that participated in formulating the present draft resolution, on behalf of the Special Committee against Apartheid, and on behalf of my Government, I appeal to the General Assembly to adopt this draft resolution by consensus.

I have reason, Sir, to hope that today you will end your brilliant and productive term as President of the General Assembly with one more act of unanimity by this body on an issue to which you personally and all of us attach the highest importance.

The PRESIDENT: I call now on representatives who wish speak in explanation of voting before the voting on draft resolution A/44/L.68. May I recall that in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401 explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. MOORE (United States of America): It is a privilege, Mr. President, to be participating in this session of the General Assembly under your firm hand and stern visage. I salute your leadership, particularly on the subject to which we are initially devoting our attention this afternoon. We also want to thank all those who participated in achieving this consensus for their spirit of co-operation and resolve.

Finding consensus is always a challenging endeavour in human affairs, as all in this Assembly are aware. The United States is joining consensus on this draft resolution not because we are in full agreement with all of its content or because we consider it an optimally balanced measure, but because we consider it important to demonstrate the extent of continuing international solidarity in support of the internal negotiating process taking shape in South Africa. We recall that the Declaration adopted by the General Assembly at its special session on South Africa last December reaffirmed

"the right of all peoples, including the people of South Africa, to determine their own destiny and to work out for themselves the institutions and the system of government under which they will, by general consent, live and work together to build a harmonious society". (resolution S-16/1, annex)

The Declaration encouraged the people of South Africa

"to join together to negotiate an end to the apartheid system and agree on all the measures that are necessary to transform their country into a non-racial democracy".

(Mr. Moore, United States)

There are no simple roadmaps or mile-posts for marking progress on the negotiating path, and the process will not be easy. But the evolution of political life in South Africa is in fact moving forward more quickly and much further than we had reason to hope. We believe that both President De Klerk and Mr. Mandela have offered bold and imaginative leadership which was responsible in large measure for the agreement reached in August between the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC) and the Government on removing all identified obstacles to the commencement of full-fledged negotiations.

We thus consider it important for the international community to do everything possible to encourage the internal negotiating process in South Africa, to support leaders already engaged in that process and to urge others to commit themselves to peaceful negotiations as well. South African political leaders on all sides deserve to have an unambiguous signal of international support for the noble effort they are beginning.

The people of the United States had the opportunity to express their support for Nelson Mandela's commitment to this process during his recent visit to this country, when he met with President Bush and addressed a joint session of Congress. We are pleased that President De Klerk has also accepted President Bush's invitation to visit Washington for further discussions on 24 September.

It is a sign of global recognition of the dramatic progress being made in South Africa that international resolutions no longer speak explicitly of economic sanctions - much less calling for heightened pressure - but refer instead to the need for continuing existing measures aimed at encouraging sustained efforts to eradicate apartheid. We believe it is appropriate for all States which have imposed such measures to take advantage of opportunities to recognize significant progress as the negotiating process proceeds. Our own economic sanctions are based

(Mr. Moore, United States)

on the comprehensive anti-apartheid Act of 1986, which explicitly spells out the steps which must be taken in South Africa before the United States could consider relaxation or suspension of any sanctions.

As we turn our attention in the coming days to the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly and an eventual discussion once again of apartheid, it is my Government's hope that we can build on today's consensus to encourage further the process of peaceful change and negotiation. We can do no less, given the importance we all attach to the dismantling of apartheid.

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/44/L.68. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt this draft resolution?

Draft resolution A/44/L.68 was adopted (resolution 44/244).

The PRESIDENT: Before calling on those representatives who wish to explain their position on the resolution just adopted, I once again remind delegations that in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401 explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mrs. PELLICER (Mexico) (interpretation from Spanish): The delegation of Mexico listened very carefully to the debate that has taken place over the past few days on the report of the Secretary-General on the policies of apartheid of the Government of South Africa. Mexico has no diplomatic or consular relations with South Africa, and our trade with that country is non-existent. We are convinced that only by applying strict sanctions can we some day make the Government of South Africa give up its racist policies.

Mexico has been following with special attention the measures taken since last February by the Government of President De Klerk of South Africa to begin dismantling the racist régime. We are convinced that such a régime must be uprooted, leaving behind no vestiges that could permit the return of those

(Mrs Pellicer, Mexico)

policies. In that context, the Mexican delegation welcomes the progress made in South Africa to eliminate the policies of apartheid, to release all political prisoners and detainees, to repeal prohibitions and restrictions on banned organizations and persons, to withdraw troops from the townships, and to repeal laws intended to circumscribe political activity in South Africa. Those are some of the steps taken by the De Klerk Government which will help attain the goal of eliminating those policies.

But in our view this is not enough. Mexico, together with all other members of the international community, will continue to fight until the day we celebrate the total eradication of the policies of apartheid. As rightly noted in the report of the Secretary-General, some progress has been made.

(Mrs. Pellicer, Mexico)

However, we wish to emphasize that much remains to be done. Major efforts must still be carried out in order to bring about a peaceful political settlement of the situation in South Africa. Mexico is convinced that the denunciation and condemnation by the international community are essential elements in reaching such a settlement. For all those reasons, my delegation supported the resolution just adopted.

Mr. RICHARDSON (United Kingdom): The United Kingdom is pleased to have been able to join the consensus on the resolution just adopted. The United Nations is united in its opposition to apartheid and in its strong desire to see it totally abolished and replaced with a non-racial democracy in South Africa. The resolution we have just adopted reaffirms that unity of purpose and we are delighted that it was adopted, Sir, before, sadly, your term as our President expires.

We regret, however, that this resolution misses important opportunities. It understates the significant changes which have occurred in South Africa since our Declaration of last December and which were identified in the Secretary-General's report. In particular, it fails to give full credit to the African National Congress and to the South African Government for their important achievement at talks in Pretoria only last month, when the two parties agreed "that the way was now open to proceed towards negotiations on a new constitution". This is what we have been calling for and, indeed, working for, for many years. The General Assembly should welcome this wholeheartedly and should urge all parties to seize the opportunity now presented to create a new South Africa through peaceful negotiations.

The present violence in South Africa is a matter of grave concern to my Government. It is primarily for the South African Government to restore peace, but all leaders in South Africa bear a heavy responsibility to help bring violence to

(Mr. Richardson, United Kingdom)

an end so that political differences can be settled peacefully. We here should urge them to act accordingly.

A process of change is under way in South Africa. We have, accordingly, adapted our policies. We have maintained a number of existing restrictive measures but, like several other countries, have relaxed certain other measures and we have taken some positive steps, such as expanding our aid programme with the objective of encouraging further progress. We regard this approach as entirely consistent with the Declaration adopted by this Assembly last December. We consider that nothing in the resolution just adopted should prevent any country from making its own judgements about how to respond to positive moves by the South African Government. Pressure has to be applied intelligently if it is to achieve the aim we all want to see, a new South Africa.

Although the resolution is unsatisfactory on some of these points, the United Kingdom wishes to preserve a consensus in this Organization and we are glad that this is, indeed, what has happened.

The PRESIDENT: In accordance with a decision taken by the General Assembly at its 3rd plenary meeting, held on 22 September 1989, I now call on the representative of the African National Congress of South Africa.

Mr. MAFOLE (African National Congress of South Africa (ANC)): By adopting this resolution by consensus, the United Nations has once again spoken in one voice. Speaking on behalf of the international community, the United Nations has said that we are no longer prepared to continue to quibble and to argue acrimoniously about apartheid when apartheid continues to wreak havoc on the people of the region and of South Africa. We are very happy, therefore, that, building on the tradition that was started with the adoption of the historic Declaration at the end of last year, we have once again adopted this common position by consensus.

(Mr. Mafole, ANC)

From the point of view of the African National Congress, the adopted text could not be said to be a highly satisfactory one. As we have always said, if the African National Congress had had the option of preparing the draft for the United Nations, then certainly the text that we would have come up with would have been totally different. However, we are very pleased that this text was adopted, particularly to the extent that it has addressed certain of our key concerns. We are very happy that this text has, in the first instance, answered one specific question, a question that is raised by our own agenda: whether or not, after the adoption of the Declaration, the South African régime has in fact created a climate conducive to negotiations. This is a particularly important question because a number of people, precisely as a result of the measures that have been adopted by the South African régime since 2 February and also because of the talks that the South African régime has held with the African National Congress, have sought to put the point across that by those acts alone the South African régime has answered the question - in other words, it has addressed the issue of meeting those requirements that are called for in the Declaration. We are very happy that the resolution does in fact say that the South African régime has not addressed that question and calls upon the régime to do so.

We are also happy that the resolution deals very seriously with a question that is of primary concern to the African National Congress and to the people of South Africa, namely, the issue of the ongoing violence which is claiming hundreds of lives. We are very happy that the United Nations has seen fit to address this question and to put it in its proper perspective and, in fact, to underline that it is precisely because of the continuing existence of apartheid that today there can be a situation that is so explosive in South Africa. The resolution says that in order for that situation to be adequately addressed it is up to the South African régime to speed up the process of dismantling apartheid.

(Mr. Mafole, ANC)

The third issue very adequately addressed by the resolution is the question of what to do, given the fact that the South African Government has not responded in full to the demands and dictates of the Declaration. We are also gratified that the resolution does in fact say that those measures that have been undertaken by the international community should be retained.

What will this resolution do for the people of South Africa? I think it is important to underline that this resolution will serve as a very great source of inspiration and encouragement for the African National Congress and for the people of South Africa, because it will show that the people of South Africa, in fact, are on the right course and that they have the support of the international community in their search for the elimination of apartheid by peaceful means. It is to be hoped that the international community will also pay close attention to a paragraph in the resolution which encourages and calls for support in the process of reintegrating those former political prisoners in South Africa and also those thousands and thousands of South Africans in exile as a result of apartheid. We hope that the Member States will pay very close attention to that and will support the effort very generously.

As has already been stated, arriving at a consensus resolution had not been very easy. We should like, on behalf of the African National Congress, to express our gratitude to all those who participated in the formulation of this resolution. We know that much effort was exerted in that direction. We should like to thank, in particular, the Special Committee against Apartheid for its tireless efforts, as well as its Chairman, Mr. Gambari. We should also like to register our profound appreciation to the Center against Apartheid. We also thank very sincerely the members of the front-line States and the members of the African Group for all their effort in helping to shape this consensus resolution. Finally, on behalf of the African National Congress, I wish to express our appreciation to the

(Mr. Mafole, ANC)

Secretary-General for all the efforts he has exerted on this question, let alone, Sir, your own efforts as President of the General Assembly and as former Chairman of the Special Committee. We should like to say how gratified we are at the fact that you are once again presiding over a meeting of the General Assembly at which a consensus resolution, has been adopted, as you have indeed been presiding over the session that also adopted the historic Declaration.

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly has thus concluded its consideration of agenda item 28.

AGENDA ITEM 34 (continued)

THE SITUATION IN CENTRAL AMERICA: THREATS TO INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY AND PEACE INITIATIVES

The PRESIDENT: Members may recall that the Assembly has adopted resolutions 44/10 of 23 October 1989 and 44/240 of 29 December 1989 on this item. As members know, the item on the situation in Central America has been included in the provisional agenda for the forty-fifth session of the Assembly.

May I take it that the Assembly considers that discussion of this item at the present session is concluded?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: This concludes our consideration of agenda item 34.

AGENDA ITEM 39 (continued)

QUESTION OF PALESTINE

The PRESIDENT: Members may recall that the Assembly has adopted resolution 44/2 of 6 October 1989 and resolutions 44/41 A to C and 44/42 of 6 December 1989 on this item. As members know, the item on the question of Palestine has been included on the provisional agenda for the forty-fifth session of the Assembly.

May I take it that the Assembly considers that discussion of this item at the present session is concluded?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: This concludes our consideration of agenda item 39.

AGENDA ITEM 46

ARMED ISRAELI AGGRESSION AGAINST THE IRAQI NUCLEAR INSTALLATIONS AND ITS GRAVE CONSEQUENCES FOR THE ESTABLISHED INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM CONCERNING THE PEACEFUL USES OF NUCLEAR ENERGY, THE NON-PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly decided on 22 September 1989 to include this item in the agenda of the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly.

(The President)

May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to defer consideration of this item and to include it in the provisional agenda for the forty-fifth session?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: This concludes our consideration of agenda item 46.

AGENDA ITEM 47

QUESTION OF CYPRUS

The PRESIDENT: Members will recall that on 22 September 1989 the Assembly decided to include this item in the agenda of the present session but deferred a decision on the allocation of the item to an appropriate time during the session. It is my understanding that it would be desirable to defer consideration of this item to the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly.

May I take it then that it is the wish of the Assembly to defer consideration of this item and to include it in the provisional agenda for the forty-fifth session?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: This concludes our consideration of agenda item 47.

AGENDA ITEM 48

CONSEQUENCES OF THE PROLONGATION OF THE ARMED CONFLICT BETWEEN IRAN AND IRAQ

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly decided on 22 September 1988 to include this item on the agenda at the forty-fourth session. It is my understanding that it would be desirable to defer consideration of this item to the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly.

May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to defer consideration of this item and to include it in the provisional agenda for the forty-fifth session?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: This concludes our consideration of agenda item 48.

AGENDA ITEM 114 (continued)

ENHANCING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PRINCIPLE OF PERIODIC AND GENUINE ELECTIONS:
DRAFT RESOLUTION (A/44/L.67)

The PRESIDENT: Members will recall that this item was reopened on 20 July 1990 and that draft resolution A/44/L.67, entitled "Assistance to Haiti" was introduced on Wednesday, 12 September. It is my understanding that this matter will not be considered at this stage.

May I take it then that it is the wish of the Assembly to defer consideration of this matter?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: This concludes our consideration of agenda item 114.

CLOSING ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT

The PRESIDENT: Not all of the distinguished persons in the Assembly Hall today were present at the start of the forty-fourth session in September of last year. Some members may therefore be unaware of just how tentative the new spirit of compromise and consensus that now pervades our world was at that time. None of us could have failed to note, however, the extraordinary change in the image and fortunes of the Organization - the United Nations - during the past year.

Where previously there was a gratuitous media reference to United Nations decisions or activities perhaps once a month, now there are incessant references to United Nations deliberations in all the media. We fully appreciate that this spotlight derives in large measure from the dangerous and escalating tensions in the Gulf region; this spotlight none the less serves to illuminate other problems, disputes and claims in the previously shadowed periphery of international awareness. All these are steadily progressing into the realm of United Nations negotiation and peaceful conflict resolution. An anonymous but uncanny visionary once noted that:

(The President)

"the future is related, and indeed indebted, to the past, and can only be perceived meaningfully and projected realistically in the context and against the background of historical experience".

Now, as we near the end of the first 45 years of United Nations history, and prepare ourselves to embark upon the forty-fifth session of General Assembly activity, the startling changes, in spirit and in perception of the Organization's significance and relevance, merit, I dare say, more than a cursory glance.

Governments in all countries and of very differing political persuasions have continually affirmed, since the first session of the General Assembly, and in as many as possible of their public statements, solid commitment to the United Nations and to all its purposes and principles. They have continued to express, as often as they decently can - sometimes in defiance of contradictory internal situations - their determination to uphold its objectives and to strengthen its effectiveness in every possible manner. Such extraordinary expressions of commitment - yet, the United Nations was simultaneously being accused of irrelevancy and incompetence. Why, I may ask, this contradiction?

(The President)

More often than not, there was an undertow of desperation to statements of solidarity: the words had become an act of faith, an incantation which all felt obliged to pronounce, but in which no great confidence was felt. The United Nations was impotent. Many of the criticisms then levelled at this institution contained more than a grain of truth; the great majority, however, were based on very real conceptions of the United Nations as something above and beyond reality, as a mythical Utopian entity that should be free of all mortal feelings. There was a need for a sharp reminder and this was bluntly delivered in 1954 by John Foster Dulles. He said:

"The United Nations was not set up to be a reformatory. It was assumed that you would be good before you got in and not that being in would make you good."

Our most sympathetic detractors claim that the United Nations - and the Assembly in particular - has managed to function despite the Members rather than in concert with them. Ironically, while individual Governments continue to exert their sovereign rights in the pursuit of the "national interest", their ever-watchful agencies and media institutions were busily pointing the finger, declaring with derision that the United Nations had failed.

Whenever the United Nations fails, it is because we, its Members, have failed. When one Member breaks ranks, the side is no longer invincible and is threatened with destruction.

We must acknowledge, even if only subconsciously, that the United Nations can never be anything but a mirror of the world as it is. The United Nations is merely an assemblage of the multiplicity of individual national States with all their imperfections. When the Member States were bellicose, the United Nations was full of bellicosity. When the world was a world of cold war, the United Nations was a system of cold war, particularly in its first 15 years. When the world was one of

(The President)

rich/poor confrontation as it appeared in the 1970s, so also was the United Nations. And if the world is now beset with nationalism, so too would be the United Nations. The United Nations is as good or as bad as the States which compose it.

This realization has been slow in coming, but its arrival is no less welcome.

The forty-fourth session of the General Assembly witnessed the gradual assumption by the United Nations of a new confidence and status as it crossed the threshold to regain its long-vacant post of facilitator of world peace and security. The three special sessions which deliberated on the destabilizing and dehumanizing impact of poverty arising from underdevelopment, drug trafficking and abuse, and the nightmare of apartheid, each produced a consensus declaration. The Assembly not only asserted itself on the essential issues of our time but demonstrated, for all time, the remarkable achievement lying well within our grasp when political will is maintained.

It is worth recalling that during the forty-fourth session, Namibia claimed its independence and assumed its rightful place as the 160th Member State of our Organization. In adopting the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session gave an unlimited guarantee that our civilization will accord due attention to the inalienable rights of children to be safeguarded, to live in a protected family environment free from persecution and neglect. This is but the foundation. It is a foundation, however, because children in poverty-stricken, drug-contaminated and violent societies, and children enduring under an inhuman apartheid régime certainly cannot be considered to exist within an environment imparting dignity, tolerance, equality, solidarity, freedom and, indeed, peace.

(The President)

This Assembly also emphasized its support of the growing détente between East and West. On 15 November 1989, in unanimously adopting resolution 44/21 on "Enhancing international peace, security and international co-operation in all its aspects in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations", we reiterated our collective belief that in an independent world, global peace and security can, and must, be rooted in the work of the United Nations - in the codified rules and principles of peace, security and international co-operation laid down in the Charter. In this context of the enhancement of world peace, the Assembly welcomed the free and fair elections in Nicaragua and looks with high expectations towards the Haitian Government and people for the fulfilment of a similar democratic potential. The painstaking efforts of all those involved in the intricate peace-making arrangements in Cambodia have been noted with increasing optimism by the Assembly - an optimism not misplaced now that Prince Sihanouk has announced his intention to preside over the Supreme National Congress in compliance with the terms of the United Nations Peace Plan. And the Assembly applauded as Trinidad and Tobago set us all an example by resolving an internal difficulty and averting a full-scale crisis through adroit negotiation. We commend it.

The peace dividend of détente has been met with welcome relief, endorsed fully by the Assembly and rehearsed exhaustively by the world's media. But the real significance of the rapprochement, however, lies in its impact on the role and functioning of the United Nations. It was Sir Winston Churchill who, in 1955, commented with remarkable foresight that "the United Nations was set up, not to get us to heaven, but only to save us from hell".

The 15 members of the Security Council ably discharged such a mandate by forestalling with skill and dexterity what appeared as an assured, inevitable war in the Persian Gulf region. Nevertheless, the Security Council, within the context

(The President)

of an organization struggling to be reborn, is heir to impulses which are only half-formed and, indeed, half understood. It must be given time in an atmosphere of consensus and unrepenting solidarity to discern, formulate and execute its responsibilities. This will require the renewed commitment to the principles of the Charter by every Member State, as Dag Hammarskjold, who spent many long hours in these chambers and in the Security Council, would undoubtedly reiterate were he alive today. His wise counsel is worth recalling at precisely those moments when problems before the Council are at their most intractable - those sessions wherein fact and feeling become so entangled that despair looms. He wrote:

"Never accept what can be gained by giving in. You will be living off stolen goods and your muscles will atrophy."

(The President)

It is a matter for regret that the same degree of concern, commitment and collective responsibility as has been applied to global political, strategic and security matters has not yet been extended to the human imperatives of the less privileged of our world. Just as détente has been achieved by discarding rigid ideologies, so too is a review of the rigid economic doctrines long overdue. The latest World Bank report on poverty paints a stark and rapidly worsening picture of poverty, which threatens to destabilize our world order at least as effectively if not as rapidly as any conflict we now see in the Gulf region. In recognition of these human imperatives, therefore, it is hardly surprising that it is the incidence of human suffering - the appalling plight of foreign victims of the Gulf crisis, menaced by their host with starvation in defiance of their rights under international humanitarian law - that is poised to undermine the consensus and purposeful functioning of the Security Council and, by default, of this Organization. In the Gulf as elsewhere, humanitarian repercussions cannot be tidily divorced from economic and political issues, in particular when the conflict itself is conceived in legal/moral terms.

As we conclude this forty-fourth session, we are mindful that the 245 resolutions and associated decisions taken are geared towards specific issues and precise purposes. We are mindful too that consensus does not necessarily translate into "democracy in action". When all is said and done, consensus is meaningless if identified objectives are not crystallized through effective implementation into tangible results. It is therefore vital that delegations carry this momentum of vision, consensus and courage into and well beyond the forty-fifth session.

It would be most remiss of me to close this session without citing for the record the diligent assistance of the Vice-Presidents of the General Assembly. One man in particular, the Ambassador of Antigua and Barbuda, my dear friend

(The President)

Mr. Lionel Hurst, has been unflagging in his efforts to discharge this responsibility. To him I owe a debt of gratitude. The Chairmen of the Main Committees and the various Chairmen of the respective regional groups have been generous with their advice and support during the past year. To all these colleagues I owe considerable gratitude. I wish also to express my profound appreciation to my own country, Nigeria, to its representative, Ibrahim Gambari, and his staff, and to the African Group for the privilege of presiding over the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly.

It has been a very great honour to work so closely with that untiring champion of peace, the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, whose recent efforts in the Middle East were entirely in keeping with his exemplary and unparalleled record for empathy, initiative, discretion and foresight in the pursuit of peaceful endeavours. The Under-Secretary-General for General Assembly Affairs, Mr. Ron Spiers, has been and I am sure will continue to be a tower of strength who quietly but effectively facilitated all. So many others, on the scene and behind it, including my presidential and personal staff, have diligently oiled this delicate negotiating machinery. Any success attributed to the forty-fourth session must in no small measure be shared with them.

And now you all, distinguished colleagues, generously facilitated the effective implementation of procedural innovations designed to enhance the effectiveness of our work. In discharging these and other duties as President of this forty-fourth session, I have neglected, perhaps predictably, to please everyone all of the time. Such a shortcoming has however been made more palatable not only through the understanding, civility and encouragement of my colleagues, but also in the knowledge that my actions were at all times based on an understanding of the collective interest as defined and delimited by our times.

(The President)

The closure of the forty-fourth session can in no way be construed as "work done"; much unfinished business remains to confront the forty-fifth session. The Palestinians continue to expect and demand their own sovereign State, as do the people of Western Sahara. The peoples of Liberia and El Salvador deserve to live in peace and security.

It is upon such delicate tasks that our collective future is anchored. Again I quote Dag Hammarskjöld, who once enjoined that

"a task becomes a duty the moment you suspect it to be an essential part of that integrity which alone entitles a man or woman to assume responsibility".

The challenge to keep sight of the wood in spite of the trees is an enormous one. The responsibility for defending our collective interests effectively is yours alone. Failure cannot and must never be contemplated.

CLOSURE OF THE FORTY-FOURTH SESSION

The PRESIDENT: I now have the honour to declare the forty-fourth session of the United Nations General Assembly closed. May your God be with you at all times.

The meeting rose at 5.30 p.m.

